

Message Text

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12

ACTION SSM-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 SS-15 IO-10 INR-07 SAB-01

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FM AMEMBASSY ATHENS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1759

INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR EG IS GR

SUBJ: PRESS REPORT THAT GREECE WILL BE THE "SUPPORT BASE" FOR
THE U.S. SINAI MISSION

1. TO VIMA (LIBERAL, OPPOSITION) DECEMBER 16 CARRIES A FRONT PAGE STORY DATED WASHINGTON, DECEMBER 15, "FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT," ENTITLED "GREECE 'SUPPORT BASE' FOR AMERICAN 'SPECIALISTS' FOR PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST." THE STORY CLAIMS THAT GREECE WILL VERY LIKELY BE CHOSEN BY THE PENTAGON AS THE "BASE FOR SUPPORT AND SUPPLY" OF THE TEAM OF AMERICAN "CIVILIAN SPECIALISTS" WHO WILL OBSERVE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN AGREEMENT ON THE SINAI AND ATTRIBUTES THIS INFORMATION TO WELL-INFORMED SOURCES IN WASHINGTON. THE STORY GOES ON TO SAY THAT A PENTAGON TEAM HEADED BY NICHOLAS THORNE WILL ARRIVE IN ATHENS SHORTLY TO MAKE AN ON-THE-SPOT SURVEY IN THIS CONNECTION.

2. ACCORDING TO THE STORY THE "AMERICAN CIVILIANS" ARE ALREADY GATHERING IN THE SINAI AND IT IS A WELL-KNOWN SECRET THAT RATHER THAN CIVILIANS THEY ARE CHOSEN FROM SPECIAL UNITS OF THE AMERICAN ARMY AND MARINE CORPS. MOREOVER, THE STORY ALLEGES THAT GREECE AND, IN PARTICULAR, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE ATHENS AREA OR CRETE, OFFERS THE BEST PLACE FOR THE

ESTABLISHMENT OF SUCH A TEMPORARY SUPPLY BASE FROM A GEOGRAPHICAL AND STRATEGIC POINT OF VIEW. IN ADDITION, THE STATE DEPARTMENT IS SAID TO CONSIDER GREECE AS A SUITABLE LOCATION IN VIEW OF ITS FRIENDLY RELATIONS WITH THE ARAB WORLD AND RELATIVELY GOOD TIES WITH ISRAEL, SO THAT THERE WOULD BE NO OBJECTION TO SUCH A SUPPORT BASE ON ITS TERRITORY.

3. WE ARE REPLYING TO ANY PRESS QUERIES ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES: FOR ATTRIBUTION, WE WILL SAY THAT THE STORY DOES NOT CORRESPOND TO THE INFORMATION WE HAVE RECEIVED ON THIS MATTER. ON BACKGROUND, WE WILL SAY THAT IT SEEMS MORE LIKELY THAT THE MAIN SUPPORT WILL BE CHanneLED THROUGH THE UN AND THE COUNTRIES DIRECTLY INVOLVED.

4. WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY COMMENTS OR ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE THE DEPARTMENT MAY HAVE. STEARNS

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